

# MEXICO

AS IT IS.

BY

THOMAS E. MASSEY, A. M., M. D.

LECTURE:

DELIVERED AT COOPER INSTITUTE, NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 20th, 1866; AND  
IN OTHER CITIES PREVIOUSLY.



WASHINGTON, D. C.

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ATTENTION being now rivetted upon Mexico, in Europe as well as America, with a scrutinizing interest, indicative of origin in its new political features—it may be profitable, and it must be interesting, to while away a few fleeting moments in an endeavor to attain some fresh or more tangible familiarity with that land of romance, of devotion, of gold and of blood. \* \*

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For economy of time, as well as for anything like a generous comprehension of *Mexico as it is*, it is important to introduce, briefly—

FIRST. The Physical Geography of Mexico—inclusive of the various climates and productions—of singular interest intrinsically, and as lending its power to *make*—

SECOND. That HISTORY, which marvellous, eventful and thrilling in itself, was potent and sufficient to *insure*—

THIRD. The existing population of Mexico, their classes and characteristics; the personal, social, material and political condition of *the people as they are!*

By careful, analytic illustration of these points, there will be no difficulty in grasping a very clear apprehension of the *logic of Mexico as we find it!*

FIRST. It has been said, and repeated a thousand times, that within the territorial limits of Mexico there are all varieties of *climate*. This comprehensive statement, however, needs qualification; for, in trusting it, one would expect to find there whatever climate or temperature he left behind him. Blessed with a delicious diversity of climate as Mexico is, its every variety is perhaps peculiar to itself. The heat is not as our heat, nor the cold as our cold. The breezes and moisture from the sea temper and soften the heat of “the coast lands;” while mountain ranges and electric atmosphere mellow that of the valleys of the interior. The *cold* is something like that of our April, without its showers and their shivering influence, and mollified by a cloudless sky and an ever genial sun. The *temperate* or intermediate altitudes, but few would think at any time too warm and none ever too cool. And a temperature appropriate to locality, remains so uniform throughout the year as to be scarcely indicated by a fluctuation

of five thermometrical degrees. One can choose the climate most congenial and there know what to expect, every day, without consulting his barometer.

The *seasons* are but two in all parts of Mexico—the rainy and the dry; the relative duration of which, and the quantity of water falling, varying somewhat in different sections of the country. While the coast, hot, lands are generally insalubrious and adapted to no labor but that of the negro or the native, the health of “the temperate” and “cold lands” is profound. But, as the climates are determined by *altitude*, and thus defy latitudinal and isothermal logic, the lines or zones which separate them are, in many localities, very small; so small indeed, that often a *single hacienda* is blessed with *all* climates and consequently all the productions. The world nowhere else is so wonderfully provided for man’s physical contentment! What are known as “the high,” “the table,” or “the cold lands,” such as those upon which all the chief interior cities are located, are those where they build their houses without fire-places and do their cooking with hand-fuls of charcoal, and stoves are unknown; and yet where cloth and woollens are worn all the year round, and neither cold nor perspiration ever veto kid gloves or patent-leather boots;—where one may stand beneath a tropical sun of over a hundred degrees, and if its rays are in the least annoying, move but twelve or eighteen inches into the shade and be as calm and “cool as a May morning;”—where butchers hang their most delicate meats in their shambles or carry them suspended from the backs of mules beneath the intensest rays of that southern sun, for days, weeks, months, and apparently years, without attracting a gnat or a fly; where spring-time never ceases, and the body and the spirits are unfretted by the elements of air or clouds; and where *all things grow* desirable to man for nutriment or luxury, from the fruits of the tropics to the cereals of a Minnesota or a Russian clime!

In a trip of less than three hundred miles, from Vera Cruz to the Capital, one passes through *all* the varieties of climates thus indicated as distinguishing Mexico. And when that gigantic and rapidly progressing work, “the Mexican Imperial Railroad,” between those cities, shall have been completed, the traveller, after a pleasant breakfast in Vera Cruz—that delightful little city; famous for its commerce; its sweet, placid tidyness; its “vomito,” which, with the accidents of life, maintains its equilibrium of population by killing off about one seventh annually; its “Northers” which blind the eyes with dust, and keep ships for days “beating about” off the harbor, or dashing them to pieces if they dare enter; its lively, mirth provoking and sleep-preventing *fleas*; its ghoul-like *buzzards*, which are guaranteed “the freedom of the city” by law and stalk about its streets with a solemn and saintly meekness only ruffled by an occasional conflict over a bone; its “*portales*” lined week days and holy days through all the

round year with tranquil and joyous imbibers of juleps, cobblers, punches and coffee ;—whirled from this haven of midsummer eternal, and sweeping by Cordova, fragrant with its matchless coffee, its oranges and bananas ; and Orizava, nestling by the side of its perpetually ice-clad Peak and luxuriant in its tobacco, its mango, and guava ; up to Puebla, “the City of the Angels,” beautiful in its quiet, tasty uniformity, cleanliness and fairy clime ;—onward, over mountains, at one season festooned with clouds whose misty haze is gladly welcomed from the torrents on either side, and at another frosted with a bride-like gauze of snow :—onward, and down again a thousand feet or more, into the lap of everlasting Spring, into the rich and beautiful valley of that ancient and modern Capital—dining at eventide in the city of Mexico, the centre of the country’s history, its wealth, its romance ; of its society, its dissipations and its agonies !

Where now stands this compactly-built city, of two hundred thousand inhabitants, with its regular streets of palatial residences, its hundreds of churches, rich in structure, in ornaments and emblems of devotion, of silver, gold, and precious stones, with thick and massive walls which have stood for centuries and will apparently defy the ravages of all time ; its colleges, museums, parks, statues and fountains ; its thronged thoroughfares of fashion and display ;—here, CORTEZ found a Capital with people of asserted fabulous numbers, and a King and Court of fabulous wealth. Situated in a most picturesque valley, some fifty miles in diameter, with deep blue mountains all around it and enclosing with it several large lakes, of water both salt and fresh, the story of its selection as the site for the Capital of the ancient Kings is thus told :

The first MONTEZUMA having secured his ascendancy and controlling the homage and tribute of vast numbers, held his Court somewhere away toward the northwest, probably on the banks of some one of the golden streams of Sonora. Becoming dissatisfied, or ambitious of extending his sway, his warrior-councillors were assembled to deliberate upon a removal of his Capital and decide upon its location. The important matter being yet undetermined, and while probably amid dissent and discord, an *Eagle* in its flight passed closely over the royal council, bending its course toward the Southeast. MONTEZUMA, quick with the idolatrous instincts of his race and epoch, saw divinity in the proud bird’s passage, and rising from his Imperial Throne, bade his councillors to bow in reverence to the omen. Quickly summoning his fleetest couriers, he commanded them to follow the Eagle in its course, declaring his purpose to found his city where first it should rest. Wearied at last, it was found perched upon a Nopal, (a species of Cactus,) in the middle of a lake, with a serpent in its beak. The couriers returned with their report ; but the haughty chieftain disdained to turn aside from his vow ; and the foundations of his new metropolis were laid upon the spot where the Eagle had alighted. And “the Eagle, Snake, and



Nopal" became the coat of arms of the Aztec Empire, and it has so *continued* through all dynasties and changes; the device is emblazoned on the coins of Mexico to this day.

Seated in that vale of mellow beauty, lavish richness and fascinating clime, the city of Mexico reaches down, on the one hand, to the luxuriant valley of Cuernavaca, but fifty miles away and four or five thousand feet below, and obtains its sugar and coffee and all the fragrant flowers and luscious fruits of the tropics; while, on the other hand, she reaches fifty miles in another direction, and from the hoary summit of Popocatepetl bears away daily installments of chrystal ice for our tables, our creams, our punches, and juleps; illustrating thus a blest land of dream-life, a "happy valley" of romance.

No one can arrive in the city of Mexico for the first time, however much he may have read about it or however distinct his impressions, without being amazed at the evidences of wealth, taste, elegance, solidity, and refinement.

Being seven thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea, the rarity of the atmosphere and the brightness of the sun have an illuminating effect, dazzling and injurious to the eye, but softened by the skillful inhabitants with the mellow tints in which they robe alike palace, temple, and dwelling. And "the moonlight of Mexico is marvellously beautiful." "The light comes, as it were, pure and pellucid from heaven, and you seem almost able to *touch* the stars, so brilliantly near do they stand out, relieved against the back-ground of an intensely blue sky." "The sharp lines of tower and temple come boldly out with shape and even color almost as bright and yet softer than at noonday." Strolling, on these nights, is attractively general; and the inhabitants would fain refuse to slumber were it not for the sake of meeting the always fresh and beautiful morrow. Nature, too, is clothed in its richest garniture. The leaves apparently know not when to fall, for it is a clime of perennial spring. "The new leaves push off the old ones with a gentle force, and the regeneration of the seasons is effected without the process of fading, wilting, withering, and dying, which makes with us the melancholy days of Autumn 'the saddest of the year.' To look at the external world, you would say there was no such thing as *death in Mexico*. The rose and the leaf you admire to-day are replaced to-morrow by fresh buds and renewed verdure."\*

The calm and gentle atmosphere impresses the habits and customs of the people. The heaviest business is conducted with the order and quiet of a parlor; and as you pass along the thronged streets, every one seems to have an object toward which he goes, *at his leisure*, while musing in inward song.

As the climate of the valley of Mexico and other table lands, moulds to a natural extent the characteristics of the people, so all the climates of the



country, without enervating, incline to calmness of spirit and repose of body.—The restlessness evinced in governmental changes and Revolutions sprung from other causes, illustrated hereafter, which were sufficiently exciting and importunate to subordinate the natural inclinations.—In times past, as at present, with but little labor the earth yielded sufficient for the wants of that simple minded people. Secluded from the rest of the world, commerce stimulated neither artificial tastes, appetites, or competition for gain, and the land was vexed with neither hoe nor plough. It strikes every stranger with wonder upon what feed the dense populations of the towns. But few, small, and scanty are the gardens; in but *patches*, at wide distances, all over the country, is all the farming, and nowhere is the ground “fenced in.” Carelessness, thriftlessness, and idleness, mantle the native as with a doom.

Within the limited territorial area of Mexico, the attempt would be vain to indicate, by boundary lines, the diversity of climate, soil, product, and deposit; of the elements which please the eye, satisfy fancy, or stimulate avarice. Travellers over every part of that country, have found or fancied winsome localities of some peculiar charms of animal, spiritual, or speculative existence. While the old Department of Jalisco combines in itself all that is picturesque and beautiful in scenery, with matchless fertility of soil, and richness of woods and of minerals; Sonora woos with its romance of history, its golden-bedded streams and mystic mountains of silver. The old State of *Vera Cruz* can sustain a population equal to that at present of all Mexico; it glories in all shades of temperature, is studded with an endless variety of useful and ornamental timber, and is the land of fruits and birds and flowers. *Oaxaca* teems with its splendid harvests of wheat, its indigo, and cochineal. *Chihuahua*, *Zacatecas*, and *Tamaulipas*, offer luxuriant fields for the herdsman and shepherd, and a thousand mines for those who would explore their depths. *Tehuantepec* tempts the developement of an interoceanic commerce to eclipse the fabled wealth of Alexandria, of Tyre and Sidon; and while its surface bears the Mahogany and Gum-tree, its soil reeks with Petroleum. The wealth of *Guerero* and *Chiapas* is yet only known to the natives; while the vast “central States,” with their staples of cotton and corn, of tobacco, coffee, sugar, wheat, cattle, and silver, offer all that is grateful to the senses, spirits, comfort and happiness of man. And yet, over all this compact and endless variety of the inviting, the useful, and the luxurious, there has been a *pall of restless night*, whose threads, linked to earth and nurtured by the air, were woven by the genius of *history*; into whose realms a brief excursion will be demonstrative that this apparent metaphor embraces the *philosophy of the condition of Mexico*.

SECOND. When CORTEZ and his cavaliers landed in Mexico—a hundred years before the Puritan pressed the rock of Plymouth—and transplanted there a Spanish civilization, which, rapidly spreading over the whole land

has endured to the present hour, he found a people with an established Government, skilled in appropriate useful arts, of singular wealth, contented, hospitable and courteous. Although the history of this secluded people is but dimly preserved in uncertain tradition, in their sculpture, mounds, monuments, and vast pyramids, the testimony of these is eloquent in sustaining the "*Reports*" of the conquerors of an empire of, barbaric it may have been, but dreamy and extravagant splendor. While the earth bore scarce a trace of cultivation, and the inhabitants were gentle, unsuspecting and indolent; gold, silver, precious stones, woollens, purple and costly dyes, overwhelmed with amazement, and stimulated avarice to treachery, rapacity and blood. The Spaniard came, in quest of that the evidences of the abundance of which in the strange kingdom were sufficient to fire brains less acquisitive and remorseless than those of his excitable race. There commenced at once examples, which rapidly became a system, of merciless oppression, extortion, and fraud, and which continued, without a check, for three centuries. Soon those who had been free "lords of the soil," and had been passing their lives in leisurely basking in the rays of that delicious sun, became mere ignoble and degraded "beasts of burden," stinted in the very food necessary to sustain their miserable lives. And even at this day it is a question whether an *Indian* or a *mule* can carry the heaviest burdens and live on the least!

But under this Spanish regime, princely cities grew with amazing numbers and rapidity, with royal mansions, and richly substantial abodes. Cathedrals and convents—vast, massive, everlasting—endowed and adorned with unmeasured wealth, impressed and awed every neighborhood. "*Haciendas*," the homes of country gentlemen, controlling the labor of thousands of "*peons*," at a mere nominal expense, dotted the land at wide distances from each other, with castle-piles to defy attacks of robbers, of armies, or of time. Roads and bridges, arches, culverts, aqueducts and viaducts were built, master-pieces of skill and strength, which still exist to attract the admiration and amazement of future ages. Argosies of silver, gold, ornamental woods, dyes, and drugs, floated off to old Spain. All the surface of the country was parcelled out, by royal grant, to favorites of fortune and the Crown. While one class surrendered themselves to aggrandizement, to high-living, culture, politeness, elegance and vice; the other was degraded into uncared-for pieces of machinery of muscle and bone. The whole country regarded but as "the mine and mint" of Spain, its *agriculture* was not only *neglected*, but positively repressed by declaring *titheable* its natural luxuriant productions; treated as a *colony* of vassals, these were not allowed to be devoted to any of those branches of industry that foster the independent and manly growth of a people, but solely to those that would crush out whatever there might be of native aspiration; all ground down into one intense work of digging, separating, and coining

silver and gold ; and with the colonization of other peoples prevented, the exclusive Spaniards grafted themselves upon the conquered and debased aborigines, and the mongrel blood, with the haughtiness of the one side, and the indifference of the other, glided into the life of the robber-guerilla, with the effect of perpetuating the exclusion of other races and the non-production of the country.

Such is a brief history and outlined picture of Mexico from "the conquest" down to the "Independence" of 1821 ; such the unpromising elements for the foundation of an independent political society !

That was a Revolution without beneficent results hitherto which transferred Mexico from its vassalage to the Spanish crown to that of its own *disheveled* people. Spain, bloated and enervated with gold and luxury, wrung from her American possessions, had long lost its strength to uphold either national domain or fame. When, at the commencement of the present century, the spirit of Revolution had been stimulated by the success of our own, the Spanish colonies of South America and Mexico at last caught the infection ; and having almost nothing to contend against but elements now of their own population, accomplished their separation from "the mother country" with but comparatively little warfare.

ITURBIDE, at first taking service under the Spanish Viceroy, soundly thrashed the Priestly and other insurrectionary Generals ; and then unfurling, for the first time, the banner of "*Independence*," achieved it, and crowned himself "Emperor."

But, now, most important and unfortunate consequences followed, which, themselves, became directly and necessarily, potently and enduringly, *causes* and *indices* of the subsequent fevered history.

It has been briefly told, that, during the Spanish rule, the estates were bestowed in immense tracts, of sometimes hundreds of leagues ; that agriculture was not encouraged ; that the wealth of the country was concentrated in the hands of the miners, the Church and the large land-owners. *With the Revolution*, the mines largely ceased to be worked, many of them filling with water, which has not been removed to the present hour ; the large merchants, those who brought and amassed capital on account of the mines, closed their business and returned to Spain ; many of the land-owners did the same, and their "*Haciendas*" were seized by the Church or transferred to mongrel offspring. Sources of revenue for any government, almost wholly disappeared, and development and progress taking no fresh start, no *new* sources were opened. As "a treasury" is an indispensable necessity for any government, and as from "the Revolution" to this day, no "government" in Mexico has been able to create an income at all commensurate with its expenses, is it won-

derful that there have been incessant Revolutions? Is it wonderful that the incessant Revolutions have prevented the development of income?

It would weary, and far more than exhaust the hour, to rehearse the changes, and the history of the changes, of rulers since 1821. In the forty-two years, down to 1863, it is historically stated that, there have been seventy-five Executives, under the various titles of Emperor, Presidents, Dictators, Provisional Governments, Substitutes, *Ad interims*, &c., &c. It is also said that there have been over *thirty* "different forms" of government; but history fails to endorse this statement, each and all having been, of necessity, *purely arbitrary*, wherever authority could be extended. Of "Revolutions, great and small," it is also said there have been over two hundred. These Revolutions, whether successful or unsuccessful, were (in the language of Brantz Mayer) "apparently objectless, and never enforced or decided a principle;" and he might, most truthfully, have added, never had any other principle involved than that of the "outs" to get "in."

A very brief sketch of the earlier and latest days of this epoch of disorder, must be sufficient for illustration of its general character and distinct features.

ITURBIDE, the chief of "the Army of Independence," sustained by his troops, was proclaimed and crowned *Emperor*. Becoming "disgusted" (to use, for the sake of brevity, an expressive Americanism) within a year, he abdicated, fled the country, and, on venturing to return, was shot. An "ad interim" or "provisional" government succeeded, composed of Bravo, Victoria, and Negrete, who calling a "National Representative Assembly," a "Federal Republic" was *proclaimed*, under the forms of which VICTORIA was declared President. VICTORIA accomplished that in which he has had but a single successor—he *served out his term*, although its latter part was vexed with turbulence and revolution. In the election which followed, and which was both violent and farcical, PEDRAZA was declared successful by a majority of but two votes over his competitor, GUERERO. *Before* PEDRAZA had taken his seat, he was "pronounced" against by the defeated candidate, which, in the course of the year, was successful, and GUERERO was "declared" *legally* elected, with BUSTAMENTE for Vice-President. GUERERO had scarcely been installed when the Vice-President "pronounced;" and GUERERO was overthrown, fled, caught, and *executed for treason*, and BUSTAMENTE installed as *President*! But very brief tranquility followed, and SANTA ANNA "pronounced" against BUSTAMENTE and in favor of PEDRAZA, whom he had been instrumental in driving out but two years before! BUSTAMENTE abdicated, and PEDRAZA was brought back to serve out the remaining three months of the term for which he had been declared first elected, in order that, upon the expiration of that brief period, SANTA ANNA might thus, dexterously, become



his successor. This accomplished, in order to pay back a very natural grudge, when SANTA ANNA had gone up *after the Texans*, BUSTAMANTE took the opportunity again to usurp power.

But it would be a waste of time to even sketch any more of these usurpations and overthrows, distinguished from each other scarcely by the respective pretences or plans of execution. At one time, the "Leperos," the extreme of the degraded of that population, after sacking the Capital and perpetrating every enormity and outrage, became "the ruling class;" and ALVAREZ, with five thousand "Pintos"—the Indians of the State of *Guerero*, whose skins are spotted and eyes white with an hereditary leprosy peculiar to their mountains—in rags and filth, captured the city of Mexico, and "declared" their chief President. ALVAREZ served less than three months, when, wearied of so much *civilization*, he voluntarily and arbitrarily turned over the government to COMONFORT, and betook himself to his own kind, in their own mountain passes, where he still *reigns*!

The ease with which the supreme authority could be destroyed or overthrown; the absurd facility with which constitutions and so-called constitutional elections could be created or set aside by any bold and daring chieftain, had been established in the first months of "independent" existence; and experience has shown how many there were to take advantage of the example.

The part played by the condition of "the Public Treasury" can have no stronger illustration than in the fact that HERRERA, fortifying his exchequer with the United States gold which bought the "peace" of 1848, held on to the Presidency for the whole term for which he had been selected—the only example in history since the first Presidency.

After the administration of HERRERA, political events reverted to their old channel; and—to skip to the end—in February, 1857, an "extraordinary Congress" (this kind of Congress had become very *ordinary*), called for that purpose, proposed a "new constitution," under which COMONFORT was "declared" *elected* President. But ZULOAGA, with the usual aid of a body of soldiers, got up "the plan of *Tacubaya*,"—"plans," "constitutions," and "pronunciamientos" amounted to the same thing, the name of the one or the other being invoked as seemed most available for the change desired,—and COMONFORT fled the Capital. ZULOAGA was, of course, *legally* installed; but, in November, 1858, was himself deposed by substantially the same forces which had set him up! A "convocation of notables" called MIRAMON to the Presidency, who became active in pursuit of disturbers of national repose. But while away at Guadalajara, at the head of his army, General ROBLES "pronounced" and was proclaimed President at the Capital. ROBLES conducted so much of the government as was limited to the city of Mexico, for *two days*, and was glad to relinquish it.—This estimable gentleman was subsequently inhumanly butch-

ered, by "Liberal" authority, and without trial, soon after the French had entered the country.—Meantime, JUAREZ got up a party—or a party got up JUAREZ—based upon his selection as Chief Justice under the "constitution" or "plan" of 1857, which provided that such officer should be the Executive in case of its vacancy by both both President and Vice-President. MIRAMON had got back to the Capital, and JUAREZ, exciting revolution in various provinces, at last got around to *Vera Cruz*. MIRAMON held the Capital, and with it the facilities for borrowing money on the faith of "the government:" and there was JUAREZ, with his Court at *Vera Cruz*, collecting the duties which MIRAMON was pledging capitalists of foreign nations. The "export duty" on silver, the chief source of revenue, was collected by MIRAMON at the Capital, and again by JUAREZ at *Vera Cruz*; while the Generals of both were sustaining their respective armies by "forced loans" of the property of capitalists, foreign as well as domestic, wherever they might be. Thus there were two governments *de facto*. France and England offered their mediation in vain, because accepted by MIRAMON and declined by JUAREZ. After many months, JUAREZ, better served by his troops, and aided by the moral support of the United States, succeeded in driving MIRAMON from the Capital and assuming himself the direction of the government from the centre; while MIRAMON in turn took to the provinces, and, with the aid of his lieutenants, was overthrowing the authority of JUAREZ in one State after another. Many Generals of the latter deserted him; the commander-in-chief of his, "the Liberal," army, ORTEGA, threatened to depose him. Violent measures taken by JUAREZ increased the confusion. He pronounced MIRAMON banished; expelled from the Capital, simultaneously, the envoys of Spain, the Holy See, and Guatemala, because suspected of "sympathizing" with MIRAMON; sequestered private fortunes; confiscated the "Church property" for the replenishment of his exchequer; and melted, "for drachmas," the ornaments of the churches and public squares. The life of the French minister was threatened; murders and robberies became of daily and nightly occurrence; life, especially of prominent foreigners, was no more safe in the Capital than on the highways. Judicial officers assumed independent and corrupt authority. There was no recognized government anywhere outside of the Capital; and that within it bore no semblance to duly constituted republican rule. Citizens of England, France, and Spain became clamorous for their loans to the various governments, forced and voluntary. MIRAMON had incessantly postponed payment; and JUAREZ, though collecting large sums avowedly for that object, dallied with the representatives of these creditors under the pretense of "no money in the treasury," and finally "decreed" payment of the foreign debt "suspended." "The triple alliance," to force payment and settle the country, was the consequence, resulting in the present Government.



THIRD. Being now prepared for a clear comprehension of the natural results of such a combination of influences as we have seen, for what we shall find, by a somewhat critical insight into the climates and the things of the earth and in the earth; into the condition and character of the people found in Mexico by its conquerors, and the uses made of them; the changes and consequences of the Revolution, and the subsequent disorders and their effects,—we are ready to look fully and directly upon the Mexican people of to-day—their classes, their social, economic and political existence and complications.

It would be interesting and agreeable to go into the dwellings of that people, and see their everyday life, with its peculiarities of habit and custom; into the abodes of the lower classes and the homes of society. But time forbids. There are certain traits, however, common to all, the highest and the lowest, too attractive for omission. Prominent among these is that of chivalrous, courteous politeness, pervading every element of the population. A reception in and an exit from a Mexican house of social position is a model of beautiful propriety. The filthiest “lepero” salutes his fellow by the roadside, with hat in hand and kindly inquiries as to the health and happiness of self and every member of the family. The respect shown to parents, to age and to misfortune is most observable and impressive. The kind and affectionate demeanor of the young to aged relatives—at times the most withered, scrawny and perhaps repulsive to strangers—excites the admiration of souls open to ennobling and reverential instincts. A boy rarely returns from his daily school without affectionately kissing the hand of his father and the cheek of his mother! A beauty and a gem of life could thus be charmingly imported from that torn, riven and abused land, to others more self-conceited! As high models of manly nobility and womanly virtue adorn Mexico as grace any people under the sun, and doubtless in a favorable numerical ratio.

The population of Mexico naturally consists of the pure-blooded, lineally descended Spanish stock; the equally unmixed descendants of the aborigines; and those whose blood is mixed. There are, in addition, a few negroes and foreigners scattered in various parts of the country. The total population was carefully estimated and divided, in 1858, as follows:

“Of pure European stock, one-fifth, or.....	1,656,620
Of mixed native and European, four-fifteenths, or.....	2,208,824
Of native or indigenous race.....	4,417,644

Being a total of..... 8,283,088 ”

Since this census the population has naturally increased; but it is important, for our purpose, to revert to estimates determined and decreed by Government itself, in 1842, in fixing a basis of representation for the various Departments. This census divides the races as follows:

Indians.....	4,000,000
Whites.....	1,000,000
Negroes.....	6,000
All mixtures.....	2,009,509
Total.....	7,015,509

The Indians and negroes were then numbered at 4,006,000 ; while the whites, together with the mixed bloods. only amounted to 3,009,509 ; leaving the pure European stock less than *one-seventh* of the whole.

Mr. BRANTZ MAYER, a distinguished publicist and author, of Baltimore, devoted to the genius of our own political institutions, was Secretary of the U. S. Legation at Mexico in 1842, and published during the succeeding year the most valuable work in the English language on the past and present of that country. *He* takes the last-mentioned estimates as a basis for the formation of others, which, according to the observation of all who have ever been in that country, are replete with substantial facts, however startling in character. "It has been *liberally* estimated," says Mr. Mayer," that of the Indians and negroes not more than *two per cent.* can read or write, and of *all* others not more than *twenty per cent.*" "If we take this computation," continues Mr. Mayer, "to be correct, as I believe from my own observation it is, and using the estimate of the Decree of 1842 for the basis of population, we shall have :

Of Indians and negroes who can read.....	80,120
Whites and <i>all others</i> .....	607,628

Total able to read and write out of a population of seven million..... 687,748 "

Mr. Mayer proceeds: "This would appear to be a startling fact in a *Republic*, the basis of whose safety is" presumed to be "the capacity of the people for an intellectual self-government. Let us, however," he continues, "carry this calculation a little further. If we suppose that out of the *one* million of *whites*, five hundred thousand, or *one-half* only are *males*, and of that half million but twenty per cent. or but *one hundred thousand* can read or write, we will no longer be surprised that a population of more than seven millions has hitherto been controlled by a handfull of men ; or that, with the small means of improvement afforded to the few who *can* read, the selfish natures of the superior classes, who wield the physical and intellectual forces of the nation, have forced the masses to become but little more than the slaves of those whose wit gives them the talent of control."

These estimates and reflections are *impressive* ; not surely because mere intellectual education qualifies men to adorn or govern a nation, or prevents treason, rapacity or scoundrelism; or that mere incapacity to read

and write makes men either dishonest, corrupt or incapable of self-government—it certainly need not make them vagabonds, “ladrones” or “guerrillas;”—but because illustrative of the extremely restricted opportunities for development in any direction; and because the distinct features of this classification, remaining substantially the same, are strongly suggestive of a suspension of wonder or doubt as to the interest, the capacity, the responsibility, of the masses of the Mexican population for governmental administration, governmental changes, and especially governmental forms, theories or principles! The broad seal set by the grasping Spaniard upon the dividing line between the races, assigned the one not only to *ignorance*, but to such distinct inferiority as no conceivable commingling and no time is potent to overcome. It is true that “mixed bloods,” as well as those of pure Indian descent, frequently attain social, financial and political position, although “the mixed,” as a rule, find their congenial association with the degraded element. But those who enter into the constitution of “the ruling class” are separated from the inferior by a barrier as peculiar and indestructible as their own massive walls of cement and volcanic rock; and is a mountain obstacle to material progress and development. Where capital and labor are not intelligently alive to mutual benefit, to reciprocal self-interest, prosperity and progress are impossible or accidental. Where the laborer does not do all he can to promote his own interest, to increase his wages and comforts of life; and where the capitalist appreciates not the benefit to himself of generous compensation and elevating treatment, development, progress, stability—all that contributes to constitute elements of *statehood*—are hedged within very narrow circles. Such is an unfortunate condition of Mexico. The man who hires work to be done, whether as farmer, merchant, contractor, mechanic, private citizen, or what not; and the man or woman who does it, treat one another as mutual enemies—the laborer doing as little as possible for the highest wages he can exact, and the patron exacting all the labor he can for the smallest possible compensation. And when the work is done, neither take any more interest in the other than if they had never met. Hence labor is capricious, and he who has an hundred hands to-day cannot rely upon ten to-morrow. This unfortunate Hispano-Indian legacy is, however, of that natural, consequential, origin which forbids all hope of change—especially of sudden, legal, forced modification. The indigenous race, upon which has been grafted all the other population of Mexico, and which has impressed considerable of its physical and moral character upon the whole, is of the stock which, *nomadic* in its primitive state, is without recognition of *meted and bounded landed property*! It is the experience of ages that it is the possession, cultivation and pride of ownership of *land* upon which depends the security of patriotism, the ambition of nationality! The blood of the Montezumas courses through the veins of the Mexican of

to-day ; and in that blood are vitalized the same instincts which have distinguished the race through all time. The Spaniard came, and soon nominally monopolized all the land. But, in the changes incident to the necessities and accidents of personal ownership, the pure-blooded natives have almost wholly, and "the mixed bloods" to a nearly equal extent, failed to manifest any departure from the spirit implanted in them from the beginning. The Mexican of the present is generally as thriftless and reckless of *property* as in the days when CORTEZ, in the name of his sovereign, found it so easy to appropriate his land and his government. Mostly without *lands*, they place but little value on any kind of property ; and as exacting as they may be, and are, in their prices for menial and other services, the spirit of *aggrandizement* is not in them ! They squander with their fellows, divide with their indigent and sick, gamble and drink away all they have to-day, utterly cool as to the income of the morrow. And with the morrow, so bountiful is the earth, and so limited the range of their appetites, that a shilling at most will pass their day and put them to bed as comfortably as the night before !

There is *apparently* much squalid wretchedness in Mexico ; thousands living more like brutes than men. And the streets of the cities and towns are revolting with the vast numbers of filthy mendicant deformed, maimed and blind. But there is probably less actual suffering from *want* than in any equal population in the world. Accustomed to but little, and kind-hearted and charitable toward one another, that little is easily procured. While begging is a profession, off of which some get moderately rich, those living on the outskirts of towns, in the most horrid filth, are as contented and happy as kings, having inherited and known no other condition of life. In distinct relief do the following very brief extracts from the work of BRANTZ MAYER place before the eye this large portion of the Mexican population.

In describing a visit to a superbly rich valley, not far from that of Mexico, that author says : "The beautiful suburbs of the town are chiefly inhabited by Indians, whose houses are built along the narrow lanes. \* \* The dwellings are exceedingly slight—a few canes stuck into the ground, and a thatch of brush complete them. \* \* \* Unkempt men, indolent and lounging, begrimed women, surrounded by a set of naked little imps as begrimed as they ; and all crawling and rolling over the filth of their earthen floor, or on dirty hides stretched over sticks for a bed. A handful of corn, a bunch of plantains, or a panfull of beans picked from the nearest bushes, is their daily food ; and here they burrow, like so many animals, from youth to manhood, from manhood to the grave. \* \* \* There is not a single ingredient of a noble-spirited and *mountainous peasantry* in them. Mixed in their races, they have been enslaved and degraded by the Conquest ; ground into abjectness during the Colonial Government ;



corrupted in spirit by the Priesthood; and now without hope, without education, without other interest in their *welfare* than that of some good-hearted *village curate*, they drag out a miserable existence of bestiality and crime. *Shall such men,*" Mr. Mayer continues, "*be expected to govern themselves? \* \* \** *Such a population—poor and servile—cares not for politics, and it were a mercy to rule them wisely and justly!*"

But there is *another* and a higher order of Mexicans, large in numbers, of some *influence*, because possessed of some *force*; of elements of occasional *usefulness*, to ambitious chieftains, and whom every one who goes to Mexico learns to *respect*, at a *distance*,—to whom we will be introduced through no fancy sketch, a picture to which the imagination has added and can add nothing.

You can visit an enchanting valley in the heart of Mexico, four or five thousand feet below its Capital and yet less than sixty miles from it, where CORTEZ chose his home and the seat of the wealth of his descendants; where the three climates bless a single estate, and through which two rivers meander gently in their course toward the Pacific; where grow the sugar, the coffee, the tropical fruits and plants which furnish the tables of the Capital; where spring and summer vie in their luxuries and glories all the year round; where the hues of the flowers are matched by those of the birds, and parrots have their nursery; where, in short, Nature in very gaiety has robed herself in the lavishness of all her charms; and where Cathedrals, temples and palatial dwellings, with walls of castle-strength have defied three centuries of time; and—while basking, with sentiment or perhaps melancholy reflection, in that delicious atmosphere and beauteous scenery, amid bowers of the soft, luscious fruits of the clime—ever and anon, perhaps several times a day, a well-understood warning note will suddenly turn all eyes to the mountains ranging round that "Paradise," as CORTEZ called it. There are figures of horsemen, with evident intentness and rapidity, scanning town and farm. They are merely taking an inventory of the neighborhood, forming an estimate of the presence of strangers, or the feasibility of an incursion upon the coffers of "the oldest inhabitant"—canvassing the opportunity for robbery and pillage. As romantic as such an intrusion upon the languid luxury of thought and sense may be deemed *afterwards*, at the time the respiration of resident and stranger recovers its equilibrium only with the retiring of those forms on the *other* side of the mountains. These are the "*guerillas*" of the country—the gentry who relieve stage-coaches, wayfarers, farm-houses, factories and mills, of anything valuable found on hand, and go scampering away with the joyousness of a practical joke! It is a large and *influential* set of men in Mexico! Mostly "mixed bloods," occasionally a native becomes sufficiently enlivened to be a partaker of the toil and spoil; a negro now and then is

elated to the pride of a saddle, while the life has been known to have its attractions for a French or an American "deserter!" These are the men to whom, if you have crops growing, you must pay tribute beforehand if you would enjoy their fruition. They are generous in their attentions, recognising no distinction between a native or a foreigner, a Conservative or a Liberal, an Imperialist or a Republican. They make *farming* a precarious business, relieving of all surplus receipts; bivouacking on accumulated supplies; and having a disagreeable habit of driving off "corrals" of mules for use or ransom, and occasionally a member of a family for similar purposes; now and then invade goodly-sized towns, and keep the population of the country *thin* and nervous! The value of the interest of *this* element of the Mexican people in public affairs or government has always been measured by the importance of their "*dash*" in "the next change."

The *mechanics, artisans, builders, manufacturing workmen, &c.*, are an interesting link in the chain of Mexican life and merit a passing notice. Quietly, slowly, perseveringly, do they devote themselves to their avocations. All kinds of handicraft, when once acquired, are practiced to perfection. In the construction and adornment of buildings they have no superiors; whether in external appropriateness or the harmony and perspective of internal embellishment, every eye is satisfied. In "type-setting," even in languages of which they know not a word, their "clean proof" would astonish many an "old typo." Hitherto the isolation of Mexican cities has compelled them to be self-sustaining in the production of most of the articles of daily use. Hence their factories of woollens, glass, paper, &c., are unsurpassed in the substantiality, neatness, and elegance of their workmanship. In painting and sculpture the genius of many is comparable with that of the Art-Capitals of Europe. Even in husbandry, though reluctant to use new tools, they are thorough in their work; and there are farms, especially in PUEBLA and OAXACA, which in perfection of cultivation would happily serve as models in Europe or America. Those of that population once sobered down to arts of industry do their work with a pains-taking, a precision and completeness which those of more civilized pretensions may strive in vain to emulate. As far back as 1535, the good Bishop of TLASCALA asks in a letter, with philosophy as well as quaintness, "who will have the impudent mind and hardened forehead to assert these men to be incapable of *The Faith*, whom we find to be most capable of *mastering the mechanical arts*." With attention concentrated upon the object of their toil, those of *this* class wot little of either foreign or domestic politics. The fluctuations of markets, the excitements of society, the news of the day, disturb their daily ways no more than the ambitions of chieftains or the rise and fall of empires.



*The ordinary tradesmen and small dealers* are absorbed in *their engrossing traffic*; and whether native, foreign, or mixed, not being accustomed to be jostled ever and anon for their "votes," or to hear a "stump speech," *these* are satisfied with the excitement of thrift by day and a count of the profits by night.

"In the ascending scale" the "*men of standing*" are reached—the Proprietors, Merchants, Capitalists. Solid capital seeks stability; fictitious capital, fluctuations—in Mexico as well as elsewhere. While there are both kinds of capital and capitalists in that country, its *history* has been most propitious to the nurture and activity of the latter class. The land-owners, or proprietors, are divisible into those who live upon and direct the cultivation of their estates, and those who, with immense possessions, live in the cities upon whatever income "administradors" or overseers obtain for them. The latter have been apt to join other capitalists in becoming mere jobbers in the rise and fall of "governments." Upon the accession of every new Executive, the first necessity was—*money*! Every government *de facto* has been sufficiently "*recognized*" by business men for them to be *willing to receive* "special privileges"—to advance heavy loans based on a well-established faith in the non-repudiation of those loans by successors, because repudiation would impair their own ability to borrow! And thus—heavy interest being secured, sometimes directly and sometimes in the way of exemption from customs-duties on imports or the exportation of bullion, and often in both ways—the community of capital became, to a large extent, mere jobbers in governmental misfortunes, and financially interested in frequent changes. By force of circumstances, therefore, governmental instability induced instability and recklessness in business; and this, in turn, became powerful in inviting "new deals," while national life was becoming "sick unto death."

"*The Priesthood*" favored the late "intervention," because the preceding Executive sequestered its property. It would, doubtless, favor a Republic or Empire, a Democracy or a Monarchy, promising to restore it.

*The Army*, being hitherto exclusively Mexican, whose *personnel* consisted of the docility, impetuousness and fickleness of Mexican character, was a mere instrument of governmental support against those domestic enemies with whom its materials daily, instinctively, affiliated—for whom they pronounced, and to whom they handed over "the helm of state" to-day, because they had defeated them yesterday! An army thus composed of a people without respect for government, instead of increasing, diminished the prospects of governmental stability, and *historically indicated the necessity of component elements removed from the traditions and temptations of the native population for national repose and progress.*

Briefly thus is the field of Mexican population almost swept. If the strictly "literary men" are omitted—teachers, professors, authors, &c., who

have pretty much the same exclusively devoted character the world over—it is apparent that the requirements of the several classes already mentioned would leave very few of that “*one hundred thousand*” of Mr. MAYER, who can “read and write,” for the *Politicians*. These have been, indeed, a very small, but a very enterprising class! Being “*out*,” they want to be “*in*,” and, being “*in*,” they want to stay there. An unusually large number of offices, proportionally, have been created for their accommodation; but it has never been possible to have enough for all, as small, comparatively, as is their aggregate number. These “*do*” the “public opinion” of Mexico! While it has been seen that there is *almost no* “*public*” to have an “*opinion*,” a very few of these men can represent a great deal; and, *when an army was available*, could at times succeed in *controlling* a good deal. Some of them now being “*in*,” may be Republicans in principle, but patriotically resign themselves to be esteemed Imperialists; while many who are out meekly endure the name of “*Liberals*.” It is by no means to be inferred that there is not as much genuine personal patriotism in Mexico as in any other country. Transfer your estimate of the amount of the patriotism of your own politicians to Mexico, and each one’s private opinion will probably be as near the truth there as here!

But, as the *politicians* have hitherto been chiefly notable as government-makers and government-destroyers, we might naturally go directly from a consideration of *the Army* to that of the GOVERNMENT, as between them there has been but a step. For, by whatever forms or names various “governments” have selected to be known, it has been seen that the semblance of popular elections has been invoked or set aside as seemed most convenient or available to *the Army* or the interest securing its co-operation.

As a *substantial*, CONSOLIDATED *despotism*, had Mexico been governed for three hundred years, by Viceroys of the Spanish Crown; and with the genius of that government, alone, were the traditions, the memories, the instincts, the usages and customs of the daily and business life of the Mexican people—of the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the aristocrat and the “lepero,” the intelligent and the stupid, the saint and the sinner—familiar, infiltrated, saturated, as with the air and the bread of existence. No element of “self-government” had ever been felt or known. No “States,” no communities, had ever combined local expression of wants or power to co-operate with or influence *the central head*. Mexico was governed, and accustomed to be governed, as is Cuba to-day, save that in the former had permeated none of that foreign and commercial element which lightens up the “gem of the Antilles.” It was all of one compact mass of *isolated social and political machinery*, revolving deeply

in the *ruts* of Time, and without a pebble of any other species or creation to jostle it! *With the Revolution* of accident, ITURBIDE grasped the genius of his native land, and wisely attempted obedience to *its traditions and everlasting laws*! But the old materials of operation had been withdrawn, and *time* was necessary for the manufacture and placing of new. The capital, which had been so employed as to choke off all other means of accumulation, had been whirled out of the country. The mines closed their mouths; and the fields reverted to the barrenness of the day when the Spaniard first pressed their bosom. Slavery was abolished, and with it the cords of *peonage* loosened. In the preceding ten years of turbulence, the laborers had imbibed a taste for no work save that of destruction. The governmental treasury was without sustenance; and military chiefs had tasted the sweets of power and command. ITURBIDE, with mingled despair and patriotism, lifted the Crown from his forehead and betook himself to a foreign land. Ignorant or reckless of history and its philosophy—of the traditions engraved on every face, on every habit about them—the multitude of aspirants clutched at the shadow of republicanism, it may be for a wider field and more chances; and, *without BUILDING*, proclaimed a “Federal Republic” where *no federation and no elements of federation had ever existed!*

It would be interesting, and amusing, to illustrate by examples the wonderful talent of desperation; the eccentric traits and the irremediable straits; the bombastic bearing and the sublime daring; the crimes, the follies, and the *fun*, which have distinguished the consequent “Governments” of Mexico. But their character, as well as the sequel, are to be read in the fragments strewed along the road over which we have been travelling together!

Carefully, systematically, and it is believed logically, have thus been elaborated and illustrated not only the complete philosophy of Mexican anarchy; of the apparently insuperable difficulties in the way of the development of that country by any agency; but even of that extreme reluctance and distinct declination of other nations to assume the burden and responsibility of having anything to do *with it* or *for it*, notwithstanding the eloquent intercession of its distractions, growing with every change, with every step, with every day, till *reprieve* seemed as hopeless as among the spirits of the lost! England, in vain, almost directly invited the United States to assume the expensive and complicating task. Said the “London Times” in 1859: “If some new military dictator were to arise, or the country were to be absorbed without more delay by the United States, their treatment (of English creditors of Mexico) could not be worse and it might, especially in the latter case, be much better.” \* \* \* \*

"Let the United States, when they are finally prepared for it, enjoy all the advantages and responsibility of ownership, and our merchants at Liverpool and elsewhere will be quite content with the trade that may spring out of it." Mr. Whitehead, the agent of the British bondholders, in a letter of September 26, 1859, said that he "could see no pacification except by the intervention of some powerful nation;" and he said further, that "that opinion prevails very generally among the more sensible part of the Mexicans themselves, who, *without desiring annexation*, would be glad to see something in the shape of an armed intervention on the part of the United States," and more than hinted that it was the policy of England to promote it. And Lord John Russell, in a letter of December 16, 1859, hovered about the same idea. But the United States, whether from motives of its politicians clearly and patriotically ascertained by *themselves*, or not; or from those of financial concern; or because of the evident difficulty or impossibility of incorporating that people into our Republican, State, system of government, positively declined the responsibility of ownership, or even of an "entangling alliance" approximating to it. "It will be remembered," says the Hon. FRANCIS J. PARKER, of *Massachusetts*, in 1865, "by such as are familiar with the history of our own treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, that the difficulty encountered by our Envoy was, not to secure *cession* of a *portion* of the Mexican territory, but to *escape the necessity of absorbing the whole*, so absolutely wanting in cohesion were the political elements there; and, in the end, in order that we might *galvanize* the authorities into such a condition as should enable us to treat for peace and to extricate ourselves from the dilemma, it became necessary to accept the concession of a breadth of territory sufficient to warrant us in assuming the indemnities to our citizens, and also to pay into the hands of the then *uppermost faction* a sum so considerable as to give *temporary consistency* to its administration, and thus to cover our evacuation of the capital and country." "Very similar," (continues Judge Parker,) "has been the experience of Napoleon. \* \* \*. He, too, has *created* a Mexican Government with which he may treat for indemnity. We, as republicans, (naturally) gave our creation the dress of republicanism; and the Emperor (as naturally) robed his in the imperial purple."

As the whole of Mexico was directly at our disposal in 1848, so also, in 1859, by the stipulations of "the McLANE treaty," that country was virtually offered to our perpetual keeping and absorption. Though the adoption of this treaty was strenuously urged by the President upon the Senate, it was never even *entertained* by that body, so far as "the public" knows. It is true that reports got outside of the "secret session" that it was discussed and voted upon, and required but a single vote for the requisite "two-thirds;" and that but a single member of the then "opposition," a Senator from Massachusetts, voted for its ratification. The terms offered



for the acceptance of the United States were strikingly illustrative of the hopelessness of Mexican affairs and the desperation of the leader who could consent to such a treaty. Had the United States Government ratified it, it would have become as virtually, completely, and consecutively the owner and controller of Mexico as if its flag had at once waved in every Capital and over every fortress and custom-house in the land. It conceded a permanent transit and right of way across Mexico on three lines—one over the isthmus of Tehuantepec, and the consequent construction of the highway of the Continent to outflank the commerce of all other nations; and the other two from our boundaries, right across those parts of Mexico most teeming with attractions for American settlers, to the ports of Guaymas and Mazatlan. It authorized the United States Government to lend its military and naval forces to the Mexican authorities, *at their expense*, for the execution of the treaty. And it did more. Mexico has not only custom-houses on the coast, but, till within the last few weeks, in the interior towns, collecting “interior duties” off of everything merchantable passing within their gates. This treaty stipulated to admit *free of duty* from this country almost every article produced, and of course would have stimulated production, in the South and West, and naturally would have settled “the inevitable Yankee” at every mile-post! In short, it would have placed Mexico, as a fledgling in the talons of a hawk. But it was clearly not considered wise for this Government to “entangle” itself even thus far; and the conclusion may have been one of most farsighted and sagacious statesmanship! For it is *certain* that JUAREZ could not have been sustained in Mexico, or slumbered in its Palace, upon the heels of his conclusion of such a treaty, (to say nothing of that subsequently offered to Mr. ORWIX, to mortgage two provinces with no hope of redemption,) without the immediate and continued presence of an American army, and the consequent complications of such an actual “intervention.” The Mexicans of intelligence, all whose opinions on public affairs are entitled to respect, are tenacious of existing territorial integrity and nationality. They are proud of their land, its glories of earth, air and sky, its majestic scenery and wealth, its capacity for future fame and power. They are patriotically anxious for their country to become illustrious in the venerated and distinctive name of “Mexico;” and sensitively fear and despise the idea of denationalization or further dismemberment. Hence, “no sooner”—quoting the language of JUDGE PARKER, of *Massachusetts*, again—“had the authority established by “*the French*” began to crystalize into the semblance of permanent government, than it met the assent of the people in every form which could give expression to the voice of the citizens. High dignitaries of the Church, Generals of the armies, Governors of the States, citizens the most influential, yielded their adhesion with apparent gladness; while the advent of

their Emperor was solicited by a 'convocation of notables,' and confirmed by the suffrages of such of the army and of the people as were not actually within the limits of opposing forces." Mexicans of patriotism filled the Cabinet, Councils of War and State, and all the other civil offices throughout the land. To save their country in its entirety; elevate it above its factions, obtain governmental financial assistance till time and development would enable it to support itself, and at last smooth the way for stability, seemed to be the aspiration of the highest Mexican patriotism!

But, if national desperation and hopelessness were manifested in the increasing convulsions and Revolutions; in the indisposition of the United States to absorb the country or wrap itself inextricably in its troubles, and in the reluctance of other nations to intervene; in the historical declination of General Scott to assume the arbitrary chief-magistracy of the country; in the offer of one, claiming to be its President, to surrender it to the folds of an anaconda; this *last consent, approbation and participation* of the *chief men of the land* in a control directed by a foreign ruler and treasure; this last *manly*, if humiliating, confession and acceptance of national failure, rather than endure continued anarchy, or longer risk political extinction, leaves no resting place for a figment of faith, of credulity, or even conjecture, in the power of unaided Mexicans to compose their country and give it a decent and honorable position among the nations of the earth!

If some elements of discord still remain, it cannot be forgotten or ignored that more formidable and more destructive and *revolutionary* have been the dissatisfactions and commotions for *all the half century past!*

Having groped amid the shadows and monuments of the past, and mingled familiarly with the life and events of the recent, we have reached now the living present—beyond which it is not given to man to penetrate.

The *wants*, the *necessities* of Mexico, are as plainly read as man's approaching doom in the daily turning of the leaves of the ledger of life! The capacity for government of itself, by its own materials, had been constantly diminishing with every effort and every change. That population, it is apparent, *had to be protected against itself*; had to be *put aside—into quietness*—with their nerves unshocked by the incessantly recurring exigencies of "the governments." Vital and absolute became the necessity for a "government" of *solid independence of the people*, leaving them and leading them by its stability, its protection and *visibility*, in channels of sobriety and repose.

It has been seen that *there are* most valuable elements of industry in *very Mexican characteristics*; that agriculturists, artisans and mechanics, *can learn* to do their work with a precision and completeness unrivalled. It has also been seen that but a very small fraction of that



people have been *gentled* into paths of usefulness. The overwhelming majority are but social and political excrescences. *With* the settling tendency of national and popular repose—the cessation of tumult—will gradually come a natural inclination to steadier habits and a susceptibility to the influences of that *great, first, absolute and pervading requisite of Mexico—a new population of other races, other peoples—a new genius and a new impulse*. Scattered over that luxuriant land, in those rich and mellow valleys, by those chrystal streams of motive power, and down in the caverns of mineral wealth, the inspiration of diversified experience and contact cannot fail to elevate the natives into useful units of the world's progress!

Already, and within the last two years, do the railroads, the steam-powers, the telegraphs and expresses begin to startle into new life, and the people into new thoughts and aspirations!

For the *first time*, since began the record of its history, are those of other and all lineage invited, and cordially, into its realms, and the way opened and smoothed for their coming!

For the *first time* are the capital, the enterprise, the citizens, of other climes, finding their way not only to the mines, but the thousand rills of improvement promotive of the contentment, comfort, and development of men and of nations; and are *protected, encouraged, and cared for there by representatives of every leading government on earth except our own*—while millions of silver and a rapidly-growing commerce are floating off to Europe without a beckon to our shores.

Rulers, governments, forms, might change incessantly and forever; might take to themselves the names of Republics or Kingdoms; Democracies, Monarchies, or Empires; and *end as all have ended before*, if failing thus to sprinkle the earth with the *new elements essential to a new life!* And should accident or incident close again this fresh well-spring of hope to that unfortunate and unhappy land; should, in other words, this last attempt to regulate and develop Mexico fail, without the substitution of some other *extraneous organic* machinery, reversion would be inevitable to that anarchy in which it has rioted and rotted for fifty years!

But the decrees of Providence are registered all along the track of time with a reckless indifference to the plans and conceits of man. \* \* \*.

The world asks, demands, needs the pacification, the development of Mexico. It *has* untold riches for the promotion of the economy, the comforts, the luxuries of life, the world over and forever!

If in the majesty of Destiny it is ordered that Monarchy and not Democracy shall be its instrument, by the roadside of Time is the consolation dropped, that Rome for centuries, and France in our own day, essayed in vain to robe themselves in the mantle of Republicanism, and marched to wealth, to glory, and to power, beneath the halo of Imperial Crowns!

But, if the transfusion of other races and other impulses are necessary for the regeneration of Mexico, in *that* consummation, under whatever shape invited and effected; in the planting of these, its essential elements of life and health; the Genius of Republicanism sees—perhaps not far down futurity's pathway—its own, complacent, image, growing and glowing in the pride of confident supremacy and perpetuity!

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## APPENDIX.

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[From the New York Daily Times, March 25, 1866.]

### "FRANCE, MEXICO, AND THE UNITED STATES—THE DANGERS OF THE SITUATION.

"*To the Editor of the New York Times:*

"The United States have called upon France through the press, through popular meetings, through the expressed wishes of the national House of Representatives, and through the correspondence of the Secretary of State, to withdraw her troops from Mexico. To this demand France replies through the language of her Emperor, through the address of her Senate and Chamber of Deputies, that she has no intention to permanently occupy any portion of the Mexican territory; but that her flag floats in Mexico by the undisputed and indisputable rights of war—that her armies found that country in a flagrant state of civil war, coextensive with its most extreme limits, which had already lasted some forty years or more—that, under the protection of the tri-colored flag, a large body of notable citizens, representing the conservative interests of all parts of the country and the whole Christian population, came together in council and decided to re-establish the monarchical principle of government, as affording the only basis upon which rested any hope for the restoration of legal liberty, public order, personal security, and the renovation of the country from the devastations of so many years of internecine strife—that to secure these objects and to found a government of sufficient strength to preserve the nation's faith with foreign countries, this great council had called upon MAXIMILIAN, an enlightened Prince of Austria, to preside over their Government under the hereditary title of Emperor—that popular opinion, expressed through the ballot-box, had approved the change in the form of government and the choice of the Archduke as their Emperor.

"France also states that it is her right, now that her armies are on the spot, to aid the establishment of some sort of government that can afford some satisfactory guarantees against the recurrence of new causes of war, or acts of injustice toward French citizens now residing in great numbers on Mexican territory. That her engagements to the new Government, and a proper regard to the Catholic Church, which rallied to its support, as well as for the persons and the interests of French citizens, require the presence of Imperial French troops in Mexico until the pacification of the country is complete. She states that she will not withdraw them upon the menace of Congressional, newspaper, or Executive warnings and demands. The opposition in France take the same ground, although originally hostile to the Mexican expedition. The supporters of NAPOLEON III. and his opponents agree in the declaration that France only moves in obedience to her own will, and not in compliance with the dictation and menaces of any foreign power. Here, then, we have before us the assumed position of both the American and French Governments in direct verbal hostility to each other. One or the other must change position or a contest between them will ensue.

"Before engaging in open hostilities it is due to ourselves and to the world that we should proceed to a candid consideration of the principles and the facts involved in the situation of the respective parties, with a view to finding a safe and honorable issue to both from its impending danger.

"What are the facts in regard to France touching this matter? France made a legitimate, if not a politic war upon the Mexican anarchical government under JUAREZ—not on our Government. She invaded and took possession of Mexican territory—not the territory of the United States. The rights of war indisputably justify her, in pursuit of the legitimate objects of the war, in taking temporary possession of the positions she now occupies on Mexican territory. We have no more natural right to require her to withdraw from Mexico, under actual circumstances, and while in the prosecution of the legitimate objects of an acknowledged legitimate war, than we have to require her to withdraw from Algiers and its dependent territory, or the coast of Africa. But we have a political, or rather an accidental right, founded upon a proper regard for the security of our commercial interests in the future, to refuse to her arms the permanent occupation of Mexico. The character of this

right grows out of the fact that France is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, military and naval powers of the world. The importance of this accidental strength of France is made apparent by a comparison. For example, let us suppose that the Government of Costa Rica had made the conquest of Mexico instead of France, and had aided the monarchical party to found an Empire under MAXIMILIAN. Had that been the case, neither the American Government nor any American citizen would have any reasonable ground to complain of the presence of the Costa Rica flag on Mexican territory. What then constitutes the difference between the two cases? A difference we all feel; but the essential principle of which few of us have given ourselves the pains to understand. In the case of France, her rights of conquest and the right to obtain indemnity and to establish such an order of things in Mexico as would give satisfactory guarantees for the future, cannot be disputed. Yet the accidental or political fact that she is a great military and naval power, and the further fact that Mexico, in her possession, occupies a position both on the Gulf, the Caribbean Sea, in reference to the West Indies, and on the Pacific, that would possibly enable France to exercise a predominant control over the waters we have mentioned, gives to the United States, as to all other commercial countries, whether they exercise it or not, a right to require that she shall not permanently possess or govern Mexico. Such a permanent occupation of Mexico by France might, in future time, restrain the natural commercial rights of the United States and other countries; great and small, in Europe and America, within the adjacent waters of the Atlantic and Pacific.

"Were the United States, England or Spain, in the permanent occupation and government of Mexico, the same dangers to the liberty and security of the commerce of the world might be the result. Hence arises the right of each and all the other nations to interpose objections to the occupation and permanent government of Mexico by any one of the great maritime and military Powers of the world. Mexico occupies such a position on the globe, that although the right to make war upon her and reduce her to terms by occupation is indisputable, yet the permanent occupation of her territory by any great Power challenges the legitimate hostility of all the other States. Such would not be the case if Costa Rica or the King of Mosquito, if there be still such a personage, should work his way into the possession of Mexico under any form of government. Mexico, under such circumstances, could not be a subject of a just alarm for any nation, near or remote. All our rights, therefore, to complain of France for the occupancy of Mexico, grows out of the power of her Government, and has no other foundation. It is thus, in the name of the freedom and the security of the commerce of the world, and of our own, and for the common advantages of a proper balance of maritime power, for the security and equal rights of all nations, that we are justified in calling on France to seasonably evacuate Mexico. That seasonable moment depends altogether upon the pacification of that country, and the establishment of an authoritative Government of its own.

"This statement of facts and illustrations seems to bring to light the true principles which lie at the foundation of this Franco-Mexican question. Our rights over Mexico, other than those of not being attacked across the border, are common to all other nations, and their rights are common to us. Neither can claim privileges or exemptions on account of proximity or distance.

"Oceans are no longer, as they once were, barriers to national intercourse. The influence of improved navigation, and the application of steam to the propulsion of ships, have made the oceans and the seas on the surface of the globe rather facilities for intercommunication between the various peoples of the earth than impediments to their intercourse.

"There is no greater triumph of human genius than modern navigation. It has brought all nations into one family, with common rights, responsibilities and obligations. No nation can claim an exception from the obligations of justice and equal humanity in all respects in their intercourse with others.

"There has been a pretension in some parts of the American Continents to claim exceptional rights and privileges in regard to international laws as acknowledged by Europe, on account of remoteness from the rest of the world. These pretensions have led to exceptional laws and extortions, practiced in several States of South America towards foreigners, particularly in Paraguay by FRANCIA and LOPEZ, and in Mexico by its so-called Republican Government, for fifty years past. But these pretensions have been set aside by the wars they have entailed on Paraguay and on Mexico. The United States have had occasion to make war on both for a dereliction of duty toward our fellow-citizens. For the same reason France has been twice obliged to make war upon Mexico, and her Government now justly claims, in the common interest of her subjects and the rest of the Christian world, to remain there until a responsible Government shall have reduced the country to a condition of tranquility, security and peace. With the purpose we have just indicated, every Christian and civilized country in the world should encourage the Emperor of the French to complete the difficult task he has undertaken.

"Having established, as we think, the principles which lie at the bottom of this portentous Franco-Mexican question, as applicable to ourselves and other countries, let us now inquire how and by what methods the rights and the honor of the respective parties can be satisfied, and all the incalculably great commercial interests involved be protected, without an open rupture between the two great Powers, now standing armed and determined in presence of each other.

"It cannot be expected that a great country like France, or any other country having the power to defend its interests and its honor, can be induced to abandon a policy entered upon for just and adequate reasons and in conformity to the laws of nations, upon the threatening exactions of any nation, however powerful. Honor is an inalienable attribute of nations as of individuals, which none have a right to assail. France is the most perfectly and pow-



erfully organized nation which the world has ever seen. Her government has in its keeping the glories of a thousand years of battles and of conquests. Her flag has floated in triumph over every capital of continental Europe. Her generous blood cemented the foundation, in modern times, of the Kingdoms of Belgium and of Greece. Her heroic bravery achieved what the bravery of no other nation could have achieved, in the conquest and the reduction of the barbarians of Northern Africa, after others had failed, to the laws of Europe and modern civilization. She stayed, with the aid of England and Sardinia, the proud advances of Imperial Russia upon the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, and saved the keys of Southern Europe and Northern Asia from falling into its hands. She gave the philanthropic aid of her treasure and blood to found, in the Western World, our great Republic—the interests, the intelligence and virtues of its people having made such a form of Government possible and desirable. She has repressed the hydra heads of an inveterate civil war in Mexico of forty years' duration, and given a helping hand to struggling Christianity and sound principles of civil Government, in their efforts to found a popular Monarchy under one of the most enlightened Princes of this enlightened age—MAXIMILIAN, of Mexico. She has left the footprints of her power and her civilization in Peking, the oldest capital of the world, in Cochín China, in Madagascar, and the far off Friendly Islands. Her Gallic cock was borne in triumph, by the side of the Cross to the Holy Land, by LOUIS XI. The Imperial eagles of the First NAPOLEON that crowned the towers of the Kremlin, and floated from the Pyramids and Alps, have been carried under his great nephew to the Crimea, on the Plains of Magenta and Solferino, to the towers of the Palace of the Montezumas. To expect that a Government thus imbued with the highest chivalrie, hereditary military spirit, and the guardian of the prestige of so many victories and so much renown through so many centuries of the world's history, will change its policy, founded upon public law and not in violation of the rights of a single nation or individual, upon the bidding of newspaper editors, or the resolutions of an unintelligent and an irresponsible popular Congressional Assembly, or upon the requests of feeble diplomacy—feeble because it had no foundation in justice or reason—is quite too childish and absurd. The idea, therefore, of driving France out of Mexico by threatening legislation and dispatches must be given up. To prosecute this policy much further will be to plunge the world into a causeless and devastating war, the end of which no one can see, and consequences of which no one can imagine.

"Have those who ask the Government to guarantee a loan to aid the expulsion of MAXIMILIAN reflected, that a threatened and a prepared blow justifies an attack to prevent it? The guarantee of a loan for such a purpose by all the several branches of the Government is a belligerent act, and would expose us to immediate war. Policy might restrain the threatened party, but his right to strike could not be contested.

"But fortunately in the adjustment of international difficulties, as in most others, where there is a will there is a way. In the case before us the principles of perfect equality upon which we have founded the rights of the United States, France, England and all other commercial and maritime countries, in regard to the necessity of maintaining for their common benefits the integrity and the independence of Mexico, suggest the basis of a diplomatic arrangement which will safely guard all the national interests and susceptibilities involved, and avert all immediate as well as future dangers of a war from this quarter. It consists in the signature of a formal convention between the Governments of England, France, the United States, Spain and the other commercial Powers, by which they all agree not to occupy, hold, possess or permanently govern any portion of Mexico; that the violation of this engagement by any one of the parties, shall be regarded as an act of hostility toward all the other parties to the convention.

"The refusal of the French Government to become a party to such an instrument might justly subject it to the suspicion of a secret intention of permanently founding her influence in Mexico to the ultimate detriment of other countries. So, too, if any of the other proposed parties object to signing such a convention, such objection might be reasonably taken as indicative of a covert purpose to inflict a wrong upon Mexico and the other parties to the convention. No well-founded objection could, however, be urged by any of them against the obligations it would impose, since these obligations consist merely in an agreement between them not to inflict an injury on each other or on Mexico. France, in the same convention and in harmony with her rights, might declare her intention to withdraw her flag from every portion of Mexican territory as soon after the pacification of the country as possible."

"The people and the Government of the United States being averse to the idea of extending our territorial possessions beyond the Mexican boundary, as now established, would find in such a convention an additional obligation to suppress illegal filibustering invasions of Mexican territory, as well as the instrument for their suppression. Political parties in Mexico, too weak to justify the hope of ultimate success, would gradually retire from the field of guerrilla warfare, and leave the whole country to fall naturally into a state of quietude and industry.

"Returning confidence between the Governments of the United States and France would restore at once the ancient feeling of sympathy between the people of the two countries, and cement a lasting friendship which should remain unbroken for centuries to come.

"We believe that the signature of a Convention of the character we have spoken of, by several of the great Powers, if it should not be concurred in by all of them, would, by its moral weight, be acknowledged as an act of public law, and effectually arrest all future attempts to possess Mexico from all quarters. Organized filibusters, legislative and administrative apostles of manifest destiny would be effectually paralyzed, and rendered harmless by the moral and legal influence of such a document, bearing the signature of the great Governments of the world.

N. N."



